

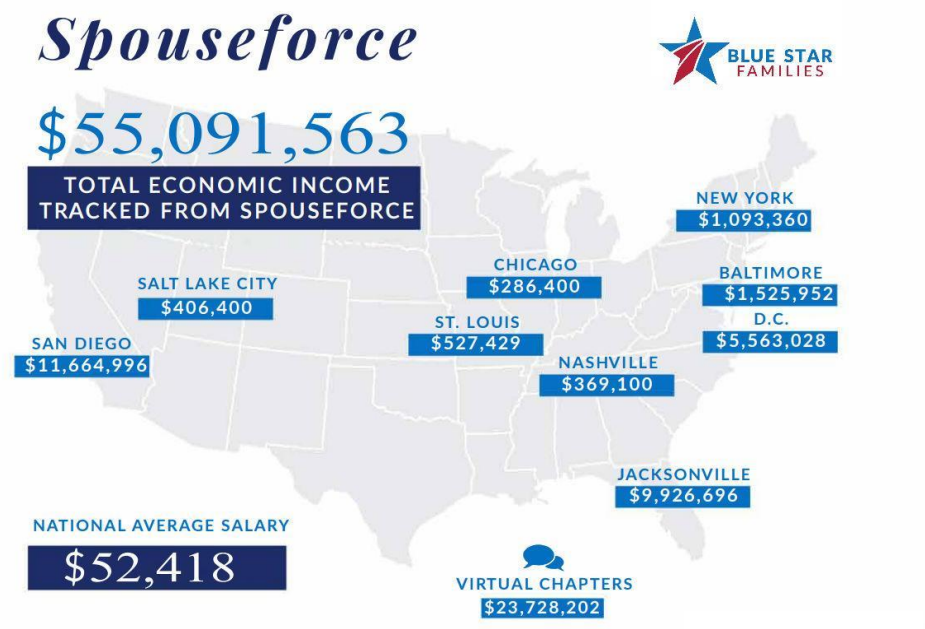
Utah Chapter

Closing the gap for Military Spouse Employment through *Spouseforce*

What we know about Military Spouse Employment Readiness:

While the rest of the country is experiencing an all-time low unemployment rate, military spouse employment has stubbornly remained at an all-time high of 26%, for a decade now.

In 2017, Blue Star Families (BSF), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, launched Spouseforce, our part of the solution to this national crisis. Spouseforce is a virtual portal that blends on-the-ground career managers with a tech-forward platform to connect employers with a pipeline of ready-to-work military spouses. In 2019 alone, Spouseforce facilitated 553 direct hires and made 3,409 referrals to best-in-class training partners. Participants in our program obtain employment with an average starting salary of \$52,000, in roles that range from HR and IT to Marketing and Communications, and much more. Since the program launched, Spouseforce has generated a national economic impact of \$55,091,563 in revenue to our military spouses and their communities. Per the below map, in regions where BSF has had full-time staff emplaced for years, such as Jacksonville, FL, San Diego, CA, and Washington, D.C., we have generated millions of dollars in economic revenue. Our Utah chapter launched in mid-2019, and has already generated more than \$400,000 in economic revenue to the community.



In addition to Spouseforce, Blue Star Families' Careers programs have also connected military spouses with job training and continuing education resources that prepare them for high-demand, high-skilled jobs in tech, project management, data analytics and more. Through our partnership

with Google, for example, we offer spouses career-training opportunities that allow them to obtain competitive skills for portable or remote positions. Through our partnership with Starbucks, we host Career Coffees Chats across the nation, professional networking and mentoring events that bring civilian and military communities together, while also providing meaningful employee engagement efforts.

How Spouseforce will integrate with existing Workforce Development Resources:

- Blue Star Families can help Utah's Department of Workforce Services and Utah's Department of Labor by marketing resources for military spouses *to* military spouses. At present, when registering with the DWS website, there is no way to indicate if you are a military or veteran spouse. The question simply asks if you are a Service Member or Veteran; if you answer no, you get no other options to indicate any military affiliation in your profile. Therefore, if there are programs or assistance available, it is difficult to make that connection for military spouses.
- The state of Utah does not currently have a central location of employment resources or information specifically catering to Military Spouses. The "Military Spouse Employment Resources" link on the Utah Department of Workforce Services (bottom right) currently links to Military Spouse Magazine, a for-profit entity. Blue Star Families can work with the Utah Military & Veterans Employment Coalition (UMVEC) to develop a comprehensive resource page where military spouses can access reliable and current information on local job leads, or obtain referrals to job skills training.
- Blue Star Families of Utah is currently part of the UMVEC team and is attending the job fairs as a resource table. These job-fair events are marketed well to Veterans, and BSF can help market them to military spouses, as well. Blue Star Families can assist with marketing these job fairs to spouses, leveraging our brand recognition amongst military families, and utilizing our network of volunteers.
- Blue Star Families can help cross-promote the jobs.utah.gov website, along with Spouseforce, as another resource for jobs, along with highlighting the Utah Patriot Partner Program designation on the DWS website.
- Job listings make up only a portion of Spouseforce. Access to continuing education resources, certification programs for high-demand jobs in IT or Project Management, and skills training preparation for virtual or remote jobs answer one of the predominant needs of military spouse employment readiness-- opportunities for portable careers that can be moved from one duty station to the next.
- Blue Star Families can plan and provide a series of classes, events, and other learning opportunities for military and veteran spouses specifically geared toward employment readiness. Working with DWS, DOL, and other area subject matter experts, BSF can plan special events in different communities across our area of operations that will help to

better prepare Spouses to enter or re-enter the workforce such as resume building, interview preparation, networking skills, and more.

Spouseforce candidates:



30%

have 6+ years
of relevant
work experience



61%

have a
bachelor's
degree or higher



11%

have a
security
clearance



65%

would prefer
remote work
options

Role of the Blue Star Families Career Manager

The Career Manager (CM) leverages local and national BSF assets, including subject-matter-expertise, bespoke engagement with national and local employers and training-providers, and partnerships across the Departments of Defense and military services. In so doing, BSF can provide localized, in-person support to participants in our Spouseforce pipeline. Beyond one-on-one support, the CM actively engages the local community by:

- Planning workforce readiness events including resume writing, interviewing techniques or LinkedIn workshops
- Holding workshops for virtual work best practices
- Doing local Facebook Live presentations with subject matter experts
- Attending on and off base job fairs
- Assisting with local hiring initiatives, especially those with military/military family recruitment goals
- Helping military spouses navigate the complex “Sea of Goodwill” of supportive organizations that can often seem overwhelming to manage



WHY THIS COMMUNITY?

Approximately 166,000+ service members, Department of Defense (DoD) civilians, and veterans call Utah home

Large concentration of military families facing:

- constant moves
- financial hardship
- lifestyles different from their neighbors
- prolonged separations and deployments

WHAT DOES YOUR CHAPTER DO?



gather and share data about challenges facing military families in this community



deliver nationally funded programs to the local community



grow participation among military families and civilian neighbors



build partnerships among local government, military, corporations, and nonprofit partners



thriving communities for civilian and military families

Contact Us:

utah@bluestarfam.org



Blue Star Careers: Provide jobs, free training, and a personal Careers Manager for military spouses.



Blue Star Welcome: Promote a sense of belonging by welcoming military families to their communities.



Blue Star Deployments: Build resiliency before, during, and after deployments.



Blue Star Neighbors: Make it easy for military, government, industry, and nonprofits to partner with our organization.



Blue Star Caregivers: Foster connections and boost morale among military caregivers.



Blue Star Connected Communities: Foster engagement through experiences such as our parks, museums, and books programs.

VALUE DELIVERED:

\$815,250
in Programs

\$298,352
Spouseforce

\$28,314
Estimated State Tax
Revenue (Based on
national averages)

\$18,000
Average Value of
Training Available
for Military Spouses